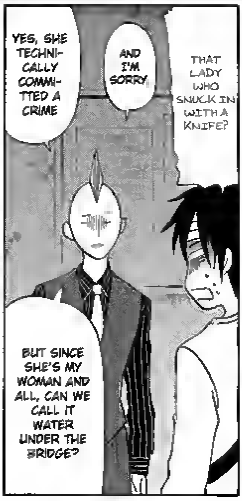
CHAPTER 16
OSADA SAKI 4
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE
THAT I GOT HIT IN THE HEAD BY A CHAIR.

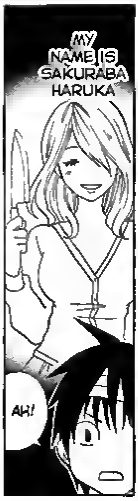
2 WEEKS TILL FULL RECO-VERY?!
THAT MUST HAVE HURT
GIRL'S BAR
IKEBANA

I ONLY ENDED UP GETTING A FEW STITCHES. I'M PERFECTLY FINE.
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU ALL WORRIED

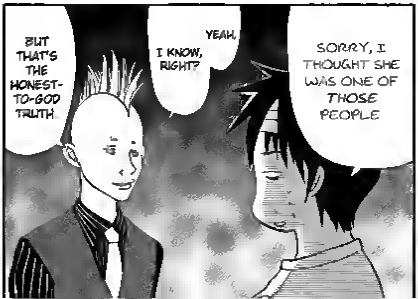
HOOK
WHAT-EVER
C'MERE
UH
OKAY
EH?
I CAN WORK JUST FINE
IN ANY CASE
YOU'RE FREE TO GO HOME, SUGIHARA

SORRY ABOUT THAT.


YES, SHE TECHNI-CALLY COMMI-TTED A CRIME
AND I'M SORRY.
THAT LADY WHO SNUCK IN WITH A KNIFE?
BUT SINCE SHE'S MY WOMAN AND ALL, CAN WE CALL IT WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE?


MY NAME IS SAKURABA HARUKA
AH!

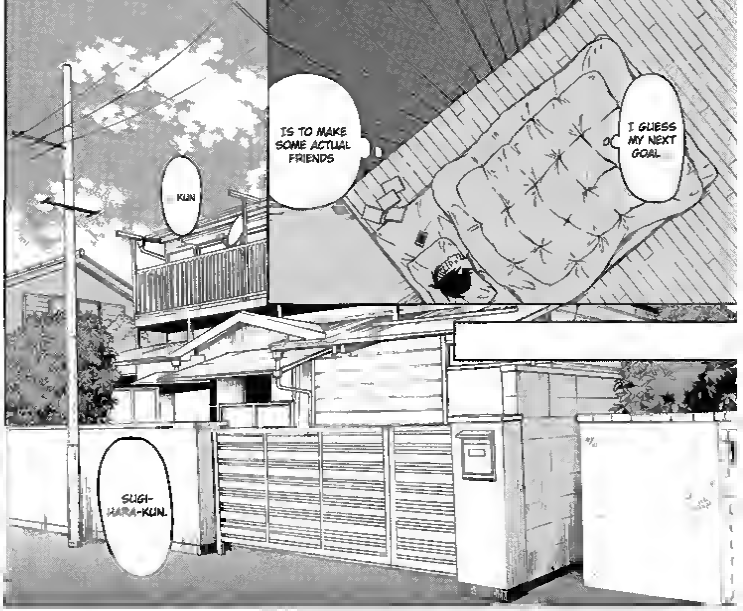
SHIKISHI
YOU MET HARUKA, RIGHT?
EH?
I HEARD FROM SAK!


BUT THAT'S THE HONEST-TO-GOD TRUTH.
YEAH, I KNOW, RIGHT?
SORRY, I THOUGHT SHE WAS ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE

AH.
SO IT'S TRUE YOU TWO ARE IN A RELATIONSHIP?

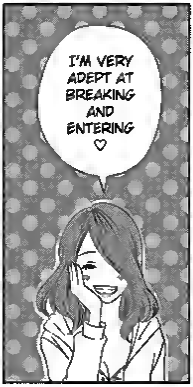
SO WHY WAS SHE ANGRY THIS TIME?
HARUKA
IS USUALLY AS REFINED AND GRACEFUL AS YOU CAN GET.
EXCEPT SHE HAS THIS HIDDEN SIDE OF HERS...
WHEN SHE GETS ANGRY, SHE'S CAPABLE OF ANYTHING
SHE FOUND OUT I WENT TO A SEX PARLOR ♡
WAS SHE?
I'LL GO APOLOGIZE TO HER.
CRUSH
CAN YOU TELL SAKI-SAN
THAT SHE SHOULDN'T BEAT HERSELF UP ABOUT IT?
SHE WAS CRYING, SAYING IT WAS ALL HER FAULT
IT'S FINE
I'LL PAY ALL THE DOCTOR BILLS.
AH
I'M SORRY.
I'LL CALL AGAIN TOMORROW.
ANYWAYS
GO HOME AND REST UP.

I SHOULD TAKE THIS CHANCE TO INVITE A FRIEND OUT TO EAT
TWINKLE
ALL THE RESTAURANTS THAT ARE USUALLY CLOSED BY THE TIME I GET OFF WORK AT DAWN
ARE NOW OPENED AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT.
AND ALL I DID WAS HIT MY HEAD OTHER THAN THAT, I'M FINE
TALK ABOUT AN UN-PLANNED VACATION.
2:30
APRIL 2 WED
SO IT'S STILL JUST BEFORE MIDNIGHT
SLIDE TO
FINISHER
YOU HAVE REACHED THE VOICE MESSAGE BOX OF
.....
THRILL PUPIL!
ALL RIGHT
I'LL CALL UP MR SWIMSUIT!
SQUEE SQUEE
LET'S GO ANOTHER ONE
WHY DID I STOP BY THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT JUST BEFORE THE LAST TRAIN?!
DASH!
I'M LITERALLY DYING OF JEALOUSY!
MART
I... DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS TO SPEAK OF, DO I?


I GUESS MY NEXT GOAL
IS TO MAKE SOME ACTUAL FRIENDS
KUN
SUGI-HARA-KUN.

SUGI-HARA-KUN
GOOD MORNING.

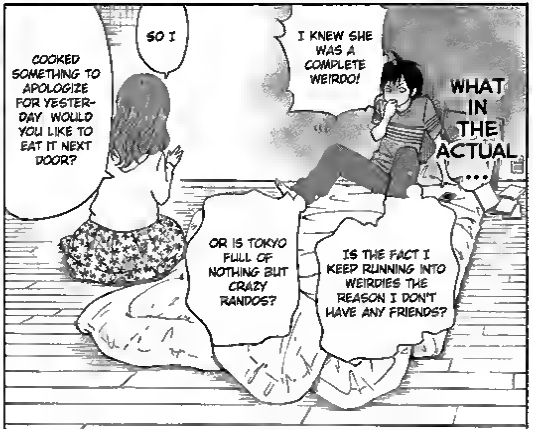
DID YOU SLEEP WELL?

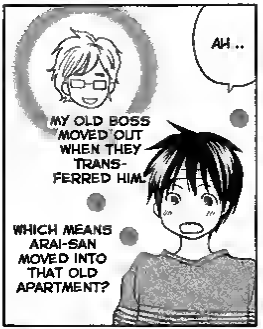

I'M VERY ADEPT AT BREAKING AND ENTERING ♡

NO, I'M
SHUDDER
I'M WONDERING WHY YOU'RE INSIDE MY PLACE

THERE'S NO NEED TO ACT SO SHOCKED
WE'VE MET YESTER-DAY. REMEM-BER?
WAA AAAA AAAA AHH!

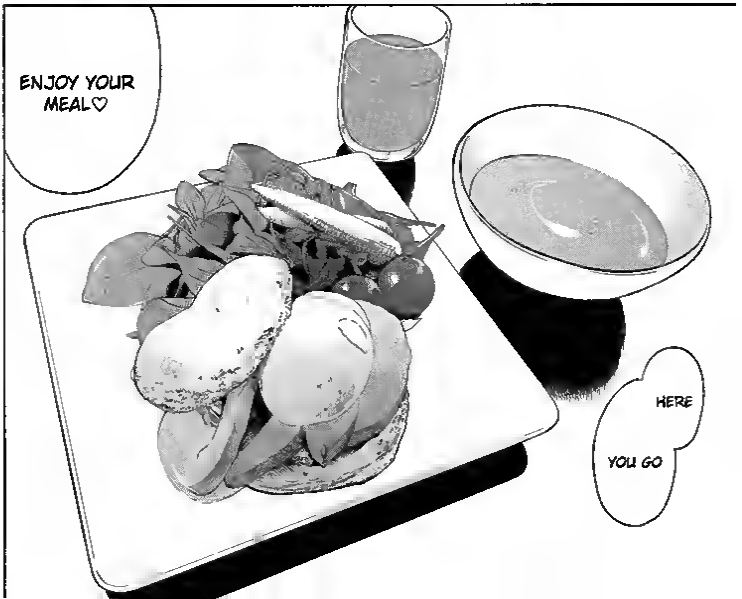
NEXT DOOR?

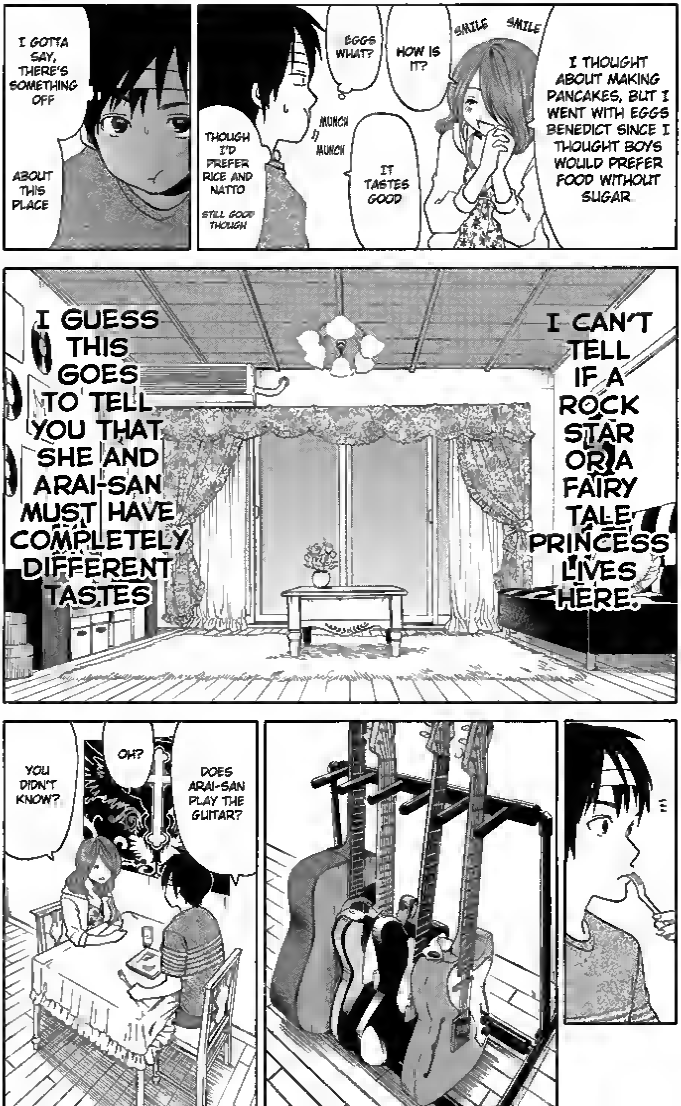

COOKED SOMETHING TO APOLOGIZE FOR YESTER-DAY. WOULD YOU LIKE TO EAT IT NEXT DOOR?
SO I
I KNEW SHE WAS A COMPLETE WEIRDO!
WHAT IN THE ACTUAL ...
OR IS TOKYO FULL OF NOTHING BUT CRAZY RANDOS?
IS THE FACT I KEEP RUNNING INTO WEIRDIES THE REASON I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS?


AH..
MY OLD BOSS MOVED OUT WHEN THEY TRANS-FERRED HIM.
WHICH MEANS ARAI-SAN MOVED INTO THAT OLD APARTMENT?

I'M
LIVING TOGETHER WITH ARAI

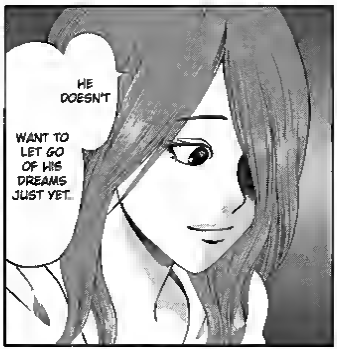
SURE
WILL I LIVE TO REGRET IT?
BEAT
BEAT
I'LL HEAD HEE HEE
POISONS ARE HARD TO COME BY, YOU KNOW ♡
DON'T WORRY, I DIDN'T POISON THE FOOD OR ANYTHING
I'M ALSO A VERY GOOD COOK


ENJOY YOUR MEAL♡
HERE YOU GO

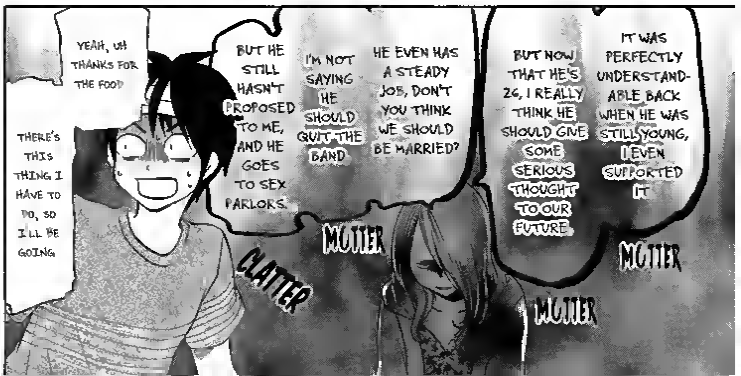

I GOTTA SAY, THERE'S SOMETHING OFF ABOUT THIS PLACE
THOUGH I'D PREFER RICE AND NATTO
STILL GOOD THOUGH
EGGS WHAT?
MUNCH MUNCH
HOW IS IT?
IT TASTES GOOD
SMILE SMILE
I THOUGHT ABOUT MAKING PANCAKES, BUT I WENT WITH EGGS BENEDICT SINCE I THOUGHT BOYS WOULD PREFER FOOD WITHOUT SUGAR
I GUESS THIS GOES TO TELL YOU THAT SHE AND ARAI-SAN MUST HAVE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT TASTES
I CAN'T TELL IF A ROCK STAR OR A FAIRY TALE PRINCESS LIVES HERE.
YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
OH?
DOES ARAI-SAN PLAY THE GUITAR?

AT AN INDIE LABEL.
HUH?! A BAND?!
HE PLAYED IN A BAND?
AND PUT OUT A CD TO BOOT?!
ALSO, IT'S NOT "PLAYED," IT'S "PLAYING."

IT'S THE CD RELEASED BY ARAI'S BAND.
THEN YOU MAY HAVE THIS
Maple Syrup


HE DOESN'T WANT TO LET GO OF HIS DREAMS JUST YET.

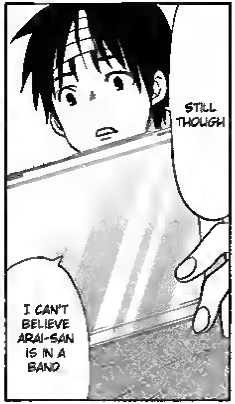
YES
MEANING IN THE PRESENT TENSE?


YEAH, UH THANKS FOR THE FOOD
THERE'S THIS THING I HAVE TO DO, SO I'LL BE GOING.
BUT HE STILL HASN'T PROPOSED TO ME, AND HE GOES TO SEX PARLORS.
I'M NOT SAYING HE SHOULD QUIT THE BAND
HE EVEN HAS A STEADY JOB, DON'T YOU THINK WE SHOULD BE MARRIED?
BUT NOW THAT HE'S 26, I REALLY THINK HE SHOULD GIVE SOME SERIOUS THOUGHT TO OUR FUTURE.
IT WAS PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDABLE BACK WHEN HE WAS STILL YOUNG, I EVEN SUPPORTED IT
CLATTER
MUTTER
MUTTER
MUTTER

CHRIST, SHE'S FREAKY!
SLAM
WE'LL TALK LATER, OKAY?!
HEY!
I'M NOT DONE SPEAK-ING!

AH
I FORGOT TO LOCK UP.
CLICK
WOULDN'T A BAND COUNT AS A DUMBASS DREAM?

I HATE PEOPLE
WHO HAVE DUMB-ASS DREAMS


STILL THOUGH
I CAN'T BELIEVE ARAI-SAN IS IN A BAND

AH!
!
WHERE DID YOU GO?

HUH?
WHAT ARE THOSE SHOES

I LET MYSELF IN SINCE THE DOOR WAS UNLOCKED
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
COOKING FOOD FOR YOU
SINCE YOU'RE INJURED
EH?
REALLY?!
NANAKO-CHAN?!
SO I'LL NURSE YOU BACK TO HEALTH!
I KNOW IT'S A HEAD INJURY, BUT I'M NOT PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED, YOU KNOW
YOU CAN'T DO A THING BECAUSE OF YOUR INJURIES, CAN YOU?!
ALSO
THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE.
I'M DEBUTING ON MY FIRST CD!
TA-DAAAH!

EH HEH HEH
I'M STILL AIMING FOR A MAJOR LABEL DEBUT
SO YOU'RE NOW AN ACTUAL IDOL
THOUGH IT'S JUST AN INDIE LABEL
WHAT? REALLY?!
NO, THAT'S STILL AWESOME!
THAT'S AWESOME!
WOW, THIS IS PRETTY WEIRD
RIGHT.
I USED TO THINK TOKYO HADNOTHING BUT WEIRDOS
BUT MAYBE I'M THE ONE WHO'S WEIRD
IT'S LIKE I'M WATCHING SOME KIND OF TV DRAMA.
MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'VE ARRIVED IN TOKYO.
IF SHE MAKES IT TO A MAJOR LABEL, SHE'LL BECOME A TRUE CELEBRITY.
TO THINK THAT THERE'S NOT JUST ONE, BUT TWO PEOPLE IN MY CIRCLE WHO ARE AIMING FOR THAT GOAL...
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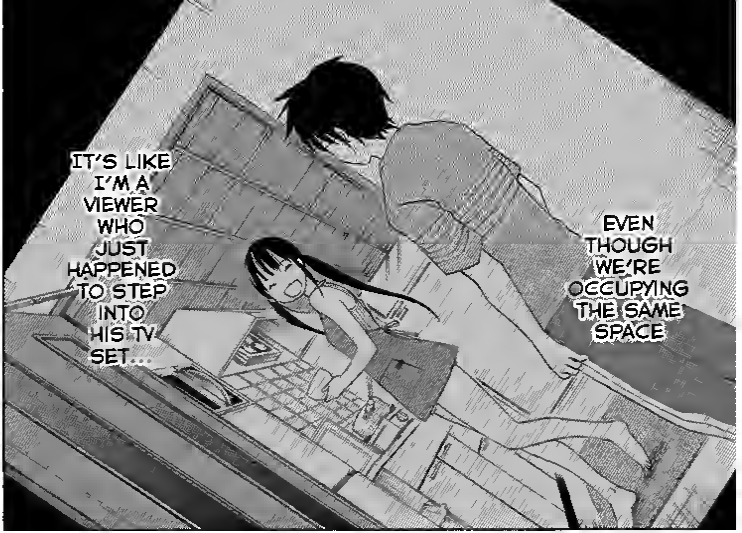
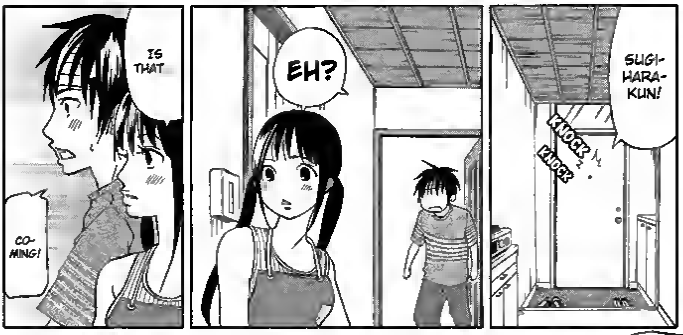
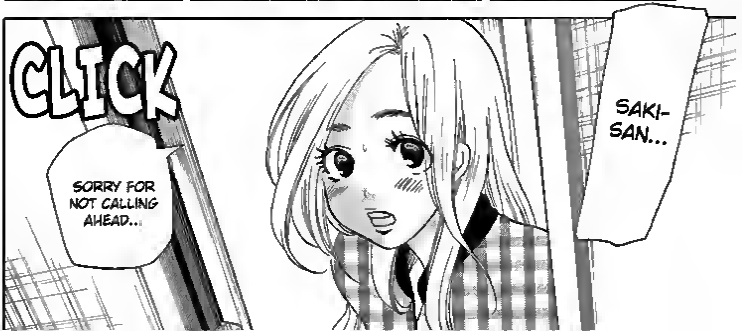
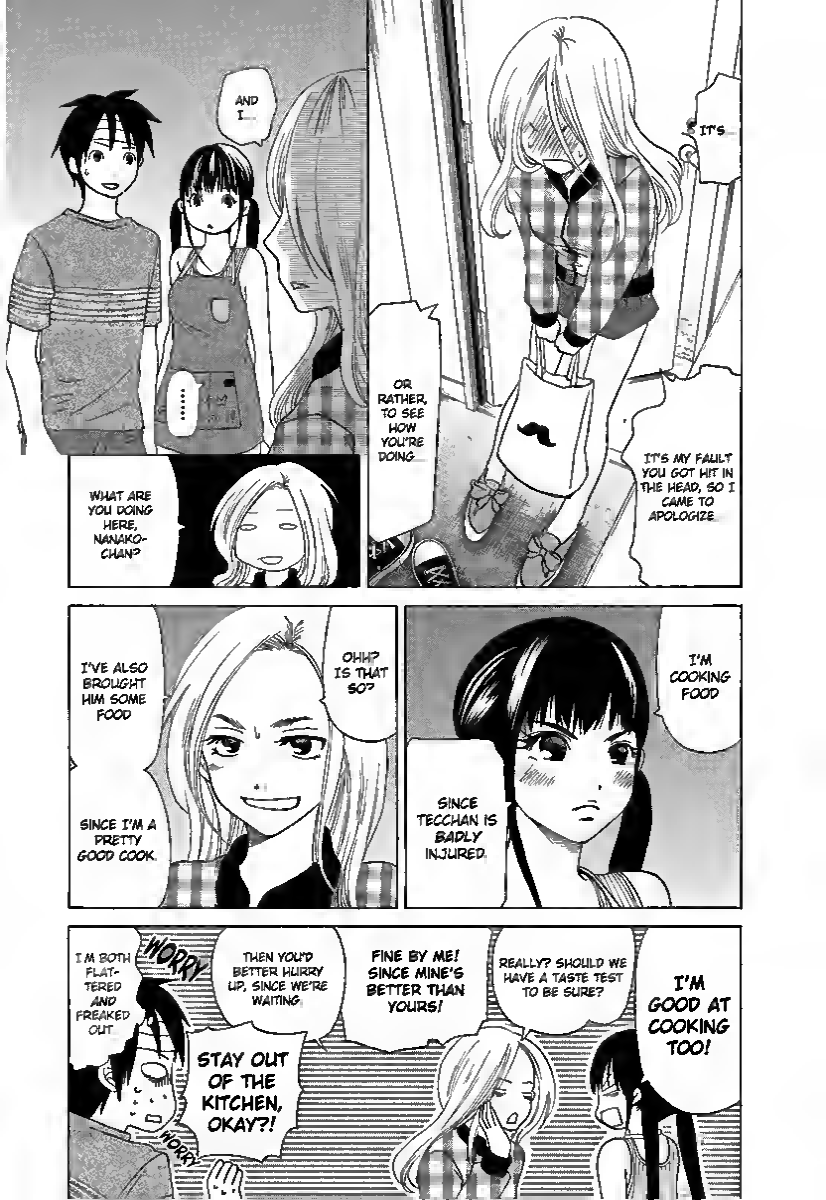
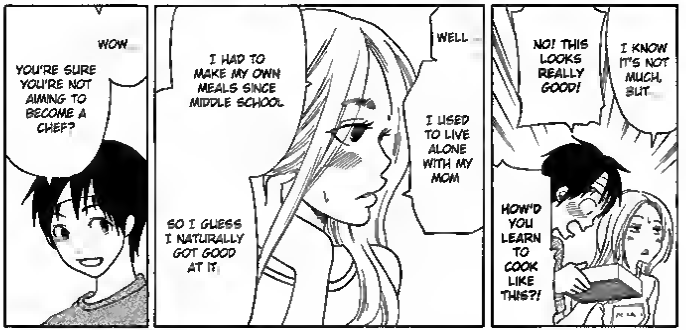

IT'S LIKE I'M A VIEWER WHO JUST HAPPENED TO STEP INTO HIS TV SET...
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE OCCUPYING THE SAME SPACE

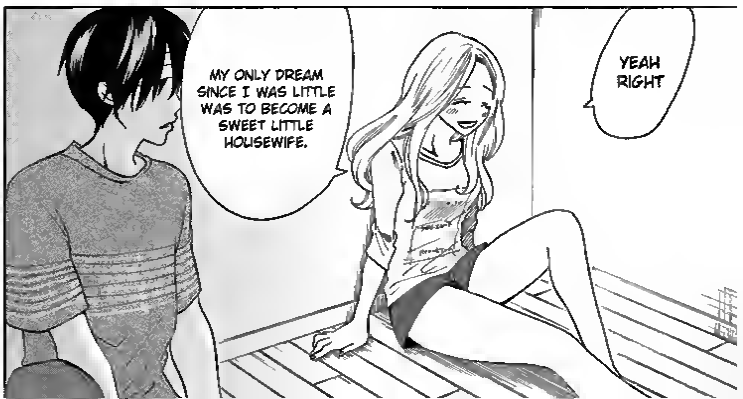

IS THAT
CO-MING!
EH?
SUGI-HARA-KUN!
KNOCK KNOCK

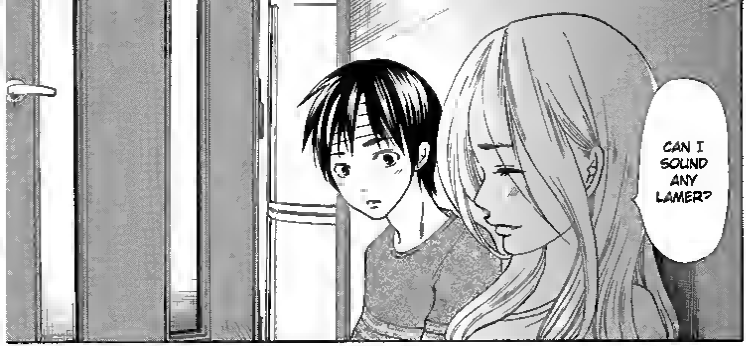

CLICK
SORRY FOR NOT CALLING AHEAD...
SAKI-SAN...


AND I...
.....
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, NANAKO-CHAN?
IT'S
OR RATHER, TO SEE HOW YOU'RE DOING...
IT'S MY FAULT YOU GOT HIT IN THE HEAD, SO I CAME TO APOLOGIZE.
I'VE ALSO BROUGHT HIM SOME FOOD
SINCE I'M A PRETTY GOOD COOK.
OHH? IS THAT SO?
I'M COOKING FOOD
SINCE TECCHAN IS BADLY INJURED.
I'M BOTH FLATTERED AND FREAKED OUT
WORRY
STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN, OKAY?!
WORRY
THEN YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP, SINCE WE'RE WAITING.
FINE BY ME! SINCE MINE'S BETTER THAN YOURS!
REALLY? SHOULD WE HAVE A TASTE TEST TO BE SURE?
I'M GOOD AT COOKING TOO!

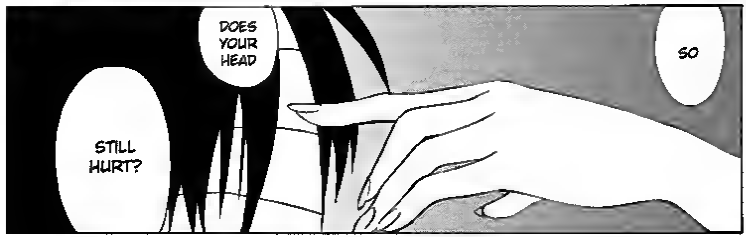
WHO WOULD HAVE EVER BELIEVED THAT SAKI-SAN OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD GO THROUGH THE TROUBLE OF MAKING ME LUNCH?
AM I DREAMING ..?
AND THE SPREAD.. IT'S PRACTICALLY GOURMET!


WOW
YOU'RE SURE YOU'RE NOT AIMING TO BECOME A CHEF?
I HAD TO MAKE MY OWN MEALS SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL.
SO I GUESS I NATURALLY GOT GOOD AT IT.
WELL
I USED TO LIVE ALONE WITH MY MOM
NO! THIS LOOKS REALLY GOOD!
I KNOW IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT
HOW'D YOU LEARN TO COOK LIKE THIS?!

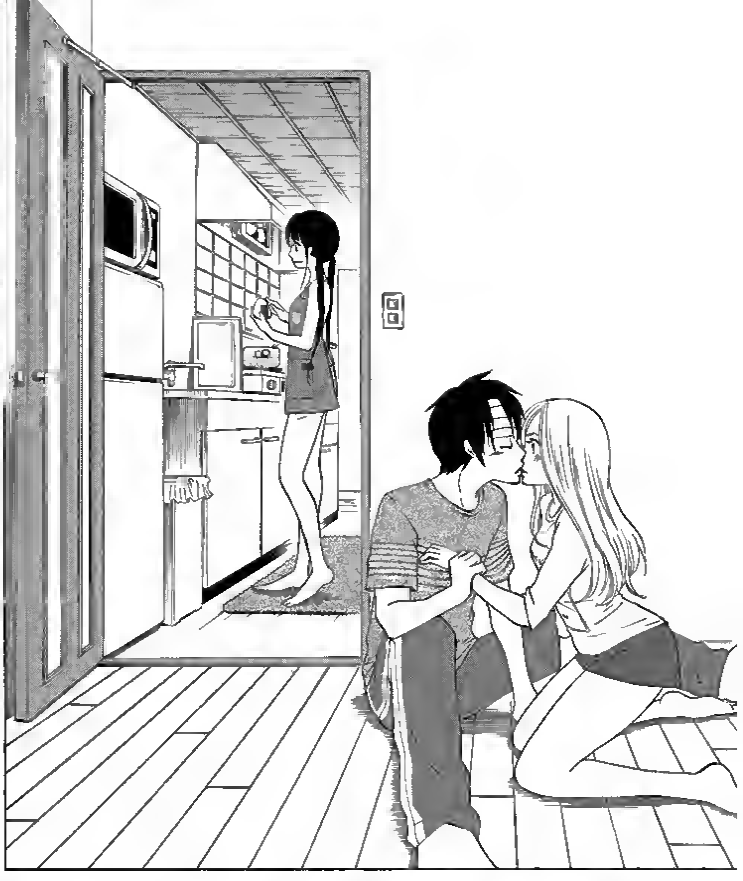

MY ONLY DREAM SINCE I WAS LITTLE WAS TO BECOME A SWEET LITTLE HOUSEWIFE.
YEAH RIGHT



AND ALL OF A SUDDEN
I FELT LIKE THE REALITY I WAS SUPPOSED TO INHABIT
HAS RECLAIMED ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE



TOKYO IS SUCH A WEIRD PLACE



WHERE DREAMS INTERMINGLE WITH REALITY.
IT'S THE ONE PLACE IN THE WORLD

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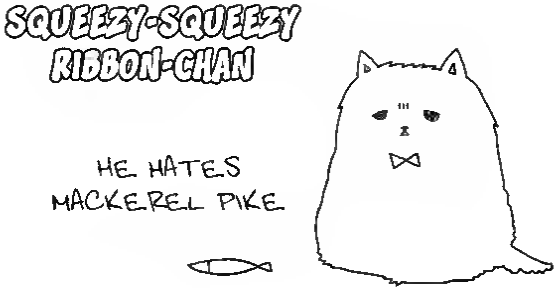
I WANT TO
FORGET
ABOUT
YOU


SQUEEZY-SQUEEZY
RIBBON-CHAN
HE HATES
MACKEREL PIKE